

CAC Minutes, October 2 2017

Present: Deana Waters, Ginny Kinne, Claire Gelvin-Smith, Eileen Harney, Chanda Meek, Kate Quick, Ken Abramowicz, Emily Perryman, Amy Bristol, Alex Fitts, Mike Earnest, Rainer Newberry, Nicole Cundiff, Carole Goering, Karen Taylor

Agenda approved, Chanda moves, Nicole seconds
Minutes approved, Mike moves, Claire seconds

Subcommittee re: AK Native GER presented report. Eileen reports successful presentation, reception seemed accepting, focused on brainstorming additional locations (grad school etc), Jessica Black is proceeding via one-on-ones, no further action at this time.

Sean Topkok, chair of GAAC, invited us to present regarding syllabi, along with Holly for an online system. Nicole reports on subcommittee for syllabus checklist, further updates at next meeting.

Eileen invites questions from Claire, who is seeking any information about rules regarding changes in syllabus well after semester start. The current prompt is a student who contacted the relevant dean appealing to withdraw after deadline because of “major” changes in workload. All agree this is a case-by-case situation, but such changes are generally frowned upon. Nicole declares there is no official policy, Chanda says informal practice is that changes can be made if the changes result in “equivalent work.” Rainer says it’s a “historic duh” like that the instructor show up to class on time.

Alex agrees it’s a problem when it happens, but “honor system” better (cringe?). Rainer says “major change” can’t be defined, Ken suggests that this particular case go through grade appeal committee, and that the grade appeal committee has previously looked favorably upon similar cases. Chanda says there are known offenders of the “equivalent work” policy; Ken says that should go through dean, not this committee. Policy can’t cover all possible problems at all times.

Eileen questions how other universities handle such policies, offers to do research, Claire joins forming a subcommittee. Consideration of reminder notes rather than policy as final thought.

Final wording on C- document, which from here goes straight into catalog. Nicole moves, Rainer seconds.

Alex sent around documents regarding FYE (First Year Experience) courses. Started in 2010 based on research about retention. Reviews were positive but courses under-enrolled so dropped from regular offerings. The attention to pre-majors and other retention initiatives being considered have led to the provost’s office recommending that FYE be considered as a requirement for pre-majors. Number of students affected by this would be around 100 per year.

These are students who have a low success rate (33% continuation to the following year, 9% to graduation). Eileen asks what our action options are. Carole questions about online options and numbers; Alex says that will need to be considered later. Chanda questions whether there was sufficient faculty to teach (confirmed, over-supply); Rainer worries that students forced into a class don't get as much out of it (external agency). Eileen questions the timing of the courses, if there is a way to ensure the students take it during the first year when it would do them the most good. Kate offers that students in some DEV classes get equivalent learning. Rainer suggests that before moving forward should at least require a specific time limit for the policy requiring careful assessment rather than auto continuation. Ginny moves to approve, Alex clarifies next steps.

Alex also had shared document this morning about capstone communication plans, notes most programs now have a capstone but the communication plans are often non-existent. In other cases the plans exist but are not always forwarded, seems like the follow-up is a problem. Additional, of those forwarded some were inadequate. We could use the Student Learning Outcomes assessment template, program review should include.

Eileen feels that administration-only default is problematic, Nicole asks procedure. Karen suggests resource list not referral to subcommittee. Eileen says too much work to add on to a standing committee right now; Nicole asks plan regarding benchmarking and suggests a group for one year to improve data collection. Eileen says program review already has plenty to do in committee. Items next year could go within Program Review cycle.

Alex responds that program review committees are named by deans and approved by Senate. One difficulty is that deans tend to name individuals who have openings in their workload, Alex would prefer volunteers. Eileen imagines getting volunteers could be complicated if it's like a call for papers/proposals. Assessment is a faculty job and needs to stay with faculty. Eileen questions what would be easiest, Chanda thinks it's a dean responsibility; Ken questions what the goal is, whether outcome or process.

Eileen moves to form a subcommittee, three initial volunteers (later 5; Alex, Eileen, Chanda, Karen, and Nicole).

Mike leads re: online withdrawal form, having drafted a proposed pop-up window example. Motion submitted also clarifies timeline, since approval across UAA/UAS will also be needed. UAA has already sent feedback that is incorporated in current version. Claire questions likelihood of students reading, Ginny argues that the message is not specific. Mike pointed out that it needs to be the same across units so can't include specific dates, Ginny gives reluctant support. Amy suggests modification of wording order, and addition of both financial aid and instructor as well as advisor for consulting. Nicole approves addition for the consulting suggestions as helping create a sense that it is a Big Deal to consider. Ken encourages that late-start course options can make the penalty less severe, but few options exist currently. Karen moves to approve, Kate and Nicole second.

Ken and Eileen both emphasize talking to department colleagues before next meeting to get wider feedback on controversial double-counting agenda item that will be taken up at that time. Meeting adjournment moved and seconded after 1 hr 10 mins meeting.